1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 RI1 Georgia RI1

[Historical and medieval Georgia]

647 (*mkvidri*) remaining and his estates taken over by the King". *Mkvidri* at the same time meant also the heir to the throne.[1] But the term *mkvidrni* is also used in a different and particular sense. For instance, it is stated by the Historian of Queen Tamara that when the expelled Prince George Bogolyubskoi invaded Georgia, and Samtzkhé and Imereti rose in his favour, Queen Tamara "inquired of the reasons from her *mkvidrni*".[2] In this sense the term can mean neither the inhabitants nor the heir to the throne. In *Matiane Kartlisai* it is stated that after the death of Dmitri of Abkhazeti, who died childless, "the *mkvidrni* of the country brought Thewdosi and crowned him King" (p. 237). Thewdosi was blind, and yet they had to crown him, for according to *Matiane* no one else was there of the royal *gvari* or house (p. 236). It is apparent from the context of this sentence that *mkvidrni* implies here, not the inhabitants of Abkhazeti, but in general the notables of the land, who had the right and power to choose the successor to the throne.

The extraordinary position held by the *mkvidrni* has led Professor Javakhishvili to the conclusion that, in Georgia, the Royal House was not the sole master of the Kingdom, but that there existed a circle whose members, known as *mkvidrni kueqnisani* (of the country) or *mkvidrni sameposani* (of the Kingdom), also had a substantial share in the government.

The scarcity of the information at our disposal makes it as yet impossible to deduce as to who were these *mkvidrni* "of the country" or "of the Kingdom"; it is evident only, that they included the *didebulni* and *vazirni*. The Historian of Queen Tamara mentions as one of the *mkvidrni* of Tiflis "Abulasan *tavadi* and *amira* of Kartli and Tpilisi". He also mentions "one of the *mkvidrni*, the great merchant Zankan Zorobabeli".

• [193] Etymologically *tavadi* is derived from *tavi*, meaning "the head". *Tavi* at the same time is the formative of "self". It is thus the Reflexive Pronoun; with this meaning *tavadi* represents the instrumental case and denotes "by himself"; *tavadi* then means "one who stands by himself"; who stands out; who is conspicuous. From *tavi* is also formed the verb *tavoba*, meaning "to head", "to lead", "to undertake", the future past participle of which is *tavadi*. *Tavadi* thus originally meant "a headman", "a leader" or "a chief". And indeed in this sense it is used in *Matiane*

[1] *Tskhovreba Mepet-Mepista Damitisi* (*Life of David King of Kings*), p. 290.
[2] *Istoriani da Azmani*, p. 437.